

A BUCKS FREE PRESS PUBLICATION



The **BLUES NEWS**

The official newspaper of Wycombe Wanderers Football Club



**Macca's
the
main
man**

Issue No. 49

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The Blues News is the official newspaper of Wycombe Wanderers. It is produced in association with the Bucks Free Press. Any correspondence should be sent to the Editor, The Blues News, Wycombe Wanderers Football Club, Hillbottom Road, Sands, High Wycombe. Telephone (0494) 472100. Fax (0494) 527633.

Fair for a bargain

WYCOMBE Wanderers are holding a Spring sale and programme fair in the Vere Suite at Adams Park, from 10.30am to 1.30pm on Sunday, March 29.

Top dealers from around the country will be there selling old and new programmes at competitive prices.

Wanderers entering crucial make or break period

We're ready to sting those Bees

GREG'S GRAPEVINE
By John Gregory

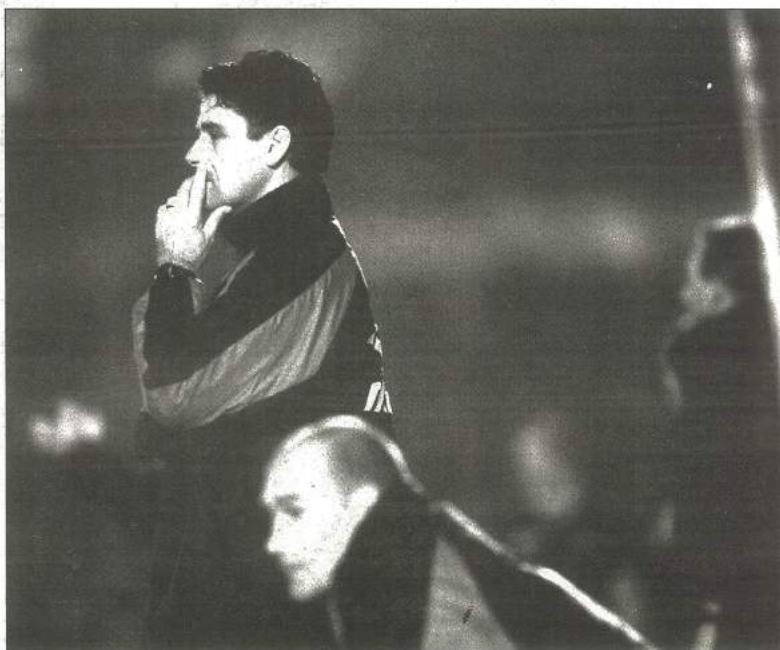
OUR match against Brentford tomorrow sees the start of a crucial period of key games, when we need to pick up maximum points to progress up the table at the expense of those teams in close proximity to us in the league.

When we played our league match at Griffin Park earlier this season the game was shown live on Sky Sports. In the end we deserved the point we earned from the 1-1 scoreline and it would be nice to pick up four points from our local rivals as we have already done against Fulham. If we can pick up maximum points from our next two home games (we play Burnley on Saturday, February 14) then the play-offs are still not out of the question.

One of my jobs as manager is to order the training and playing kit for the first team squad, youth team squad and my playing management team. It may surprise you to learn that I sat down with our official kit suppliers Mizuno last month and ordered all we will need by way of socks, shorts, shirts, towels etc for the 1998/99 season.

The reason you have to do it so early is to ensure delivery by mid-July when the players start back training and the new intake of YTS lads arrive. With so many other football clubs wanting training kit delivered at the same time, you have to order early.

Many Blues supporters asked why the club did not sell the red strip as a replica kit after we introduced it for the Colchester United FA Cup match at Layer Road in November 1996. The simple answer is that the club decided it was not fair on its fans to have four replica kits on sale, and have only ever had a maximum of three available. However the all-red



John Gregory: Looking to the play-offs

kit has proved a sufficient hit with the players and fans that we decided before Christmas to introduce it officially next season.

I believe it will be on sale at Wanderers in Town from Monday, June 1. Another reason I like the red kit is that it offers a complete change to the quartered navy and sky home kit

and the quartered navy and yellow away kit, so hopefully we will not have a situation next season where a referee prevents us from wearing one of our playing kits.

There are still 17 matches to go, with 51 points up for grabs. As last season proved you must win your home matches. We have nine

Division Two matches left at Adams Park and your support is needed.

I know the lads really appreciate it when you get right behind them and it genuinely makes a difference. I am looking forward to tomorrow's match against Brentford and hoping the players will have your full vocal support.

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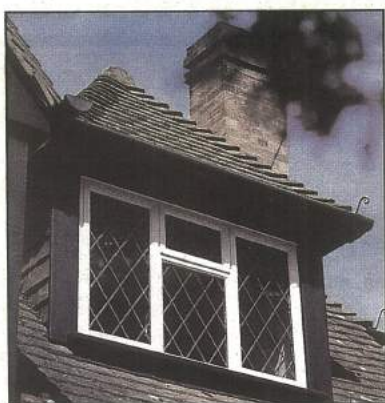
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Lovel End,
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Wed (8.00pm)
Holmer Green Mid. Sch,
The Common,
Holmer Green

Thurs (8.00pm)
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CONTACT:

MARTHESE
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6

THE BLUES NEWS

Director Alan Parry calls for businesses to invest in an exciting future

Youth is the way forward

OUR future success lies in our ability to maintain a youth policy that will produce players for years to come.

With our present constitution there is no way we can hope to "strike it rich" by being taken over by a rich benefactor like Mohammed Al-Fayed at Fulham. Starved of an influx of cash we are left with the reality that we are unable to buy players unless we sell first.

This is clearly counter productive and leaves us with only realistic alternative - to produce our own talent.

A supporter pointed out to me that the average age of our squad is higher than most teams in the division. Fair comment - but they overlook that whilst all of our rivals have been operating youth policies for years, ours is still in its infancy.

This is only the third season we've employed YTS players and when you remember the first intake were 15 and 16 years old, it's hardly surprising we compare unfavourably. In fact, we've been remarkably successful in such a short space of time. Three have gone on to the first team - Mo Harkin, Alan Beeton and Gary Wright. If that ratio continues, our youth system will have more than paid for itself.

Unfortunately, there is no guarantee that any of our present crop of youngsters has what it takes to be successful - but then even

By Alan Parry

Manchester United can't make a similar guarantee about their apprentices.

It is my belief that Neil Smillie has done a truly outstanding job as youth team manager. Don't forget he inherited someone else's players when he took over from Steve Walford - and Steve had been forced to acquire youngsters who were surplus at other clubs.

It takes a long time - plus a great deal of money, hard work and good fortune - to produce a youth system as successful as that which has made Dario Gradi so famous at Crewe.

Their system is self-perpetuating. They find a player, teach him, play him in the first team and then eventually sell him to a bigger club. The money they raise from his sale keeps the wheels of their youth system well oiled for the next few years.

In this area we face a lot of top quality competition from clubs in the Premiership and First Division who comb the district looking for boys.

Inevitably, if a boy has the choice of joining Wycombe or Chelsea, the lure of the Premiership wins nine times out of ten. That's what we're up against.

However, Neil has an experienced and highly talented youth development officer in Adi Cole and between them they leave no

stone unturned in attracting the best to Adams Park. We must do everything we can to make their job easier because that's the key to our future.

The whole area of youth development is undergoing massive changes at the moment as the FA implement their blueprint for the future. Neil and Adi have kept the board informed of the way these changes could affect us.

One thing we must do is raise money to provide the facilities for coaching youngsters. We already receive sponsorship for our youth team, but it's never enough.

If there is a business or individual who would like to help, I'd be delighted to meet you. We have a very exciting plan to develop playing and coaching facilities at an excellent site in the Wycombe area. It would benefit the whole community, not just Wanderers but we simply don't have the cash to fund it.

Our scheme would give hundreds of local children the chance to receive expert coaching at a top, safe and comfortable venue. It would be a catastrophe if it collapsed because of lack of money. I'd pay for it myself if I won the lottery tomorrow! However, realistically our biggest hope is that a local businessman will read this and come to our rescue.

If we can get this scheme off the ground it will be the biggest boost our future's ever had.



Throw in some cash: Alan Beeton's a YTS success

TV or not TV that is the big question from the fans

By Keith Blagbrough
WW Official Supporters Club

YOU may remember at Fulham in the Auto Windscreens Shield match we saw a goal awarded against us after the ball had been crossed from out of play. The referee's assistant did not see it.

This coincided with an article in the press by Bob Wilson, who argued that refereeing in this country is going backwards. It included some excellent items, particularly in the areas of creating professional referees who will get together to ensure consistency, meet and train with the footballers so that they know where they are. He then went on to suggest that referees need help using technology with the positioning of cameras around the ground to help with decisions as they do in cricket and rugby league for example.

Well with his TV background he would wouldn't he? These cameras would be used to rule on line decisions, offside and other rulings. They should be manned by another referee sitting in the stand who would give decisions. So far so good and after Fulham, who in Wycombe would disagree with this principle?

Bob of course then completely goes over the top by suggesting that 20 cameras would need to be sited permanently around the pitch at every ground in the country together with the installation of all the cabling for the record and

playback technology. Of course, he quite forgets to say who will pay for this.

A further problem is that soccer is or should be a flowing game and not subjected to any more interruptions. When the cameras are used in cricket the ball is dead and they are used in rugby league to decide whether a try has been scored, again when the ball has gone dead.

Maybe the answer is that a few cameras are installed on an experimental basis at selected grounds to be used in situations where the ball has gone dead, did the ball cross the line? or was the foul in or outside the penalty area?

Anything that can help referees is welcome, but it needs very careful thoughts first.



Constructive suggestions such as this need serious consideration.

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One to watch

MATTHEW James has been named
the youth team player of the month
for December.

James, who plays midfield, was
chosen for the Lucozade Sport sponsored
award, by youth team boss Neil
Smillie.

A presentation was made to James
by Nigel Patterson of the Walters
Group, the official youth team sponsors,
recently.

The midfielder is a first year YTS
player with Wanderers youth team
who play in Division Two of the
South East Counties League.

● In the senior side, Steve McGavin
was presented with the Supporters
Player of the Month award for
December, voted for by the fans.

McGavin was presented with his
award by Derek Vere, managing
director of Verco, Blues' official club
sponsors.

The player's Mark Your Man sponsors
Sharon Healey (home) and
Selina Perrin (away), also took part in
the presentation.



Youth star: Matthew James



THE BLUES NEWS

9



Celebration: Youngsters enjoy their moment of fame in the Wycombe v Preston game

Youth invasion

WANDERERS have been standing by their policy to promote youth down at Adams Park. The ground has become the place to be for youngsters on a Saturday afternoon.

The club's quid-a-kid scheme, run at specific games, has proved a great success and Wanderers are getting even more youngsters through the gates with their Football in the Community

scheme. Youngsters have been taking to the Adams Park pitch during the half time of Wanderers' home games to take part in penalty shoot-outs organised by Dave Evans and Nas Bashir.

And the kick-about has proved a real winner for the football mad youngsters who want a taste of what it's like to play on the park.

As if that isn't enough to get the children down there, Wanderers recently

had a promotional visit from the famous McDonald's mascot Ronald McDonald.

Ronald visited the toddlers in Wycombe Wanderers Creche in the Vere Suite during the first half and took part in a half-time penalty competition with Bluey the Swan.

Blues fans soon realised that Ronald was not much of a goalkeeper - at least Bluey, the Wanderers mascot, managed to save a shot or too.



Getting them going: Dave Evans' commentary is enough to spur the teams along



Lap of honour: Penalty competition winners celebrate



What a clown: Ronald in goal

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BLACKWELL HEATH:
Blackwell Heath Community Centre, The Straight Bar,
* (NEW VENUE) 7.30pm Phone Lillian: 01494 815491

TUESDAYS: TYLERS GREEN:
St Margaret's Parish Church Rooms, Church Road, 9.30am (Only day class in area) Phone Kay: 01494 813958

CRESSEX:
Methodist Church Hall, Spital Street, 7.30pm Phone Ellen: 01628 471262

MARLOW:
Methodist Church Hall, Spital Street, 7.30pm Phone Ellen: 01628 471262

WEDNESDAYS: HAZLEMER:
The Barn, Cedar Avenue, 5.30pm and 7.15pm Phone Jan: 01494 792658

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THE BLUES NEWS



Up for grabs: Mark Stallard is one of the players available

Make your mark on one of the Blues

JASON Kavanagh, Michael Forsyth and Dave Jones are among the Wanderers up for grabs in the club's Mark Your Man sponsorship scheme.

If you would like to sponsor a Wanderer call Mark Austin at the club on (01494) 472100. Here are the current sponsors.

John Gregory - James, Harry & Victoria (H&A); Richard Hill - Francis Glenister (H); Salomon Brothers in Ltd (0171) 721 3891 (A); Neil Smillie - The Blues Supporters Club (01494) 563697 (H&A); Dave Jones - available; Martin Taylor - George & Matthew MacKenzie (H); Coach No.1, The Blues Supporters

Club (A); Brian Parkin - available; Nicky Mohan - Phil Turner (H); Richard Vere (A); Paul McCarthy - Denzil, Margaret & Andrew Ashcroft (H&A); Michael Forsyth - Bucks Auto Components (H); available (A); Jason Kavanagh - Bill & Sheila at the Disraeli Arms (01494) 526760, available (A); Jason Cousins - The Royal Oak, Great Kingshill (01494) 711199 (H); Christine Bye (A); Steve Brown - Paul & Alan Gillott (H); Ann Cohen & Co, Solicitors (01494) 677420 (A); Dave Carroll - Elaine Blake (H); Alan & Kathy Hutchinson (A); Keith Ryan - Link Precision Services (01844) 347062 (H&A);

John Cornforth - Quality Heating Services Ltd (01494) 538488 (H&A); Michael Simpson - available (H&A); Steve McGavin - Sharon Healey (H); Selina Perrin (A); Mark Stallard - Vince's Table (H); available (A); Paul Read - Graphic Arts Supplies Ltd (H&A); Aaron Patton - available (H&A); Alan Beeton - Sharon & Gary Trimby (H); available (A); Maurice Harkin - Wycombe Wanderers Independent Supporters Club (H); Frances Carvell (A); Ben Hodgson - available (H&A); Gary Wright - available (H&A); Keith Scott - Catherine Worboys (H); Alan, Michael & Richard (A).

Pearl warns of chasing a few million

Million or two is of little use

Dear Supporter,

At the AGM last October, the chairman announced that it was desirable to make some minor changes to the Articles of Association.

This is the document which sets out the rules of membership, voting in of officers and other fundamental matters.

The reason for proposing the changes is simply to bring the rules into line with current sensible operational requirements.

Some supporters have made the incorrect assumption that the object is to tidy up details to make ready to float the club on the stock market or to sell the assets to a wealthy individual.

Neither option is desirable or indeed necessary.

WWFC Ltd has a nett asset value in the accounts which places it in the top 12 of all football clubs in England.

If the stadium was revalued to reflect recent improvements, the asset value would rise even further.

Your club does not have large debts but neither does it have a lot of cash.

Some supporters have suggested to me that the board might seek a wealthy individual willing to put in 'a million or two'. This is not an attractive option for two reasons.

Firstly, we are competing with a number of teams where substantial sums have already been injected from outside, notably Watford, Wigan and Fulham. The timing is wrong.

We need these teams to get promotion first.

In addition, teams including Burnley, Bristol City and Preston enjoy much higher income than ourselves due to larger attendances.

If you buy expensive players then you also take on wages for two or three

FINANCIAL REPORT
by Graham Pearl,
financial director

seasons at a level that we cannot justify on current income. So 'a million or two' would not go very far.

Somewhere nearer £10m might get you a potential championship winning team but with no guarantees, eg Wolves and QPR.

Which brings me to the second objection.

The club is probably worth around £10m to the right individual. So selling the club for a few million would be doing an injustice to Wycombe Wanderers members.

The other consideration is that once sold, control over destiny has gone forever.

Our stability is envied by most other football clubs and very strong reasons would need to be argued to lose that advantage.

Another angle on large cash injections is to look at the longer term consequences. Not always does it lead to happiness amongst supporters. And there is no certainty of the continuing interest of those benefactors.

The way forward is to continue to invest in our youth team and to produce our own young and committed stars.

Also to encourage young supporters to visit Adams Park and, yes, to wear our fabulous quartered shirt. That way we can build a team which can find itself and endure.

That is the position today. For tomorrow I cannot predict.

Dear Supporter, please be patient. Our time will come again. We just need to make sure that we are in good shape to take advantage of any opportunity that comes our way in the future.

McGuinness should not be missed

SKY Sports commentator Alan Parry believes no one should miss Wilf McGuinness at Blues' Sportsmans Dinner on Monday, May 18 at Adams Park.

Alan says: "No one will be disappointed."

Although for the younger generation McGuinness may not be a big name, he is highly respected on the after-dinner circuit as a top drawer performer.

His style and humour is similar to Jackie Blanchflower, who many of Wycombe's customers rate among the best speakers ever to have appeared at Adams Park.

McGuinness succeeded Sir Matt Busby at Manchester United and remains the only man to have played for and managed the Red Devils. He was a member of the England coaching team during the 1966 World Cup.

He played for England and was understudy to the great Duncan Edwards at Manchester United, before injury cut short his playing career.

If you want to see this outstanding performer, contact Mark Austin on (01494) 538461 or (01494) 472100 to

book a table of ten or 12.

Reservations for this final Sportsmans Dinner of the 1997/98 season are being taken, as usual, on a first come first served basis.

The Directors of Adams Park Events Ltd are also proud to announce the All Star line up for 1998/99

● Monday, September 28 - guest speaker Gordon Banks, comedian Tony Gerrard

● Monday, November 23 - guest speaker Norman Whiteside, comedian Peter Lucas

● Monday, January 25 1999 - guest Speaker Gareth Chilcott, comedian Mike Pugh

● Monday, March 22 - guest speaker John H Stracey, comedian Tommy Sutton

● Monday, May 17 1999 - guest speaker Tommy Docherty, comedian Eddie Archer

● The Old Blues Association Ltd is considering running another Fred Trueman Sportsmans Dinner at Adams Park this year. If you are interested call (01494) 472100.

WYCOMBE WANDERERS' SEASON TICKET PRICES FROM 06/02/98

Amersham & Wycombe College Stand (Formerly Main Stand)	VP's (Block D)	£225.00
	Adults	£105.00
	Senior Citizen	£99.00
	Junior/Student	£92.00
Servispak Stand, Upper Tier Blocks N, P, Q	Adults	£105.00
	Senior Citizen	£99.00
	Junior/Student	£92.00
Servispak Stand, Upper Tier Blocks L, M, R, S	Adults	£92.00
	Senior Citizen	£84.00
	Junior/Student	£74.00
Servispak Stand, Upper Tier Blocks K, T	Adults	£74.00
	Senior Citizen	£65.00
	Junior/Student	£59.00
Bucks Free Press Family Enclosure (a no smoking area)	Adult	£74.00
	Senior Citizen	£59.00
	Junior/Student	£20.00
Axa Equity & Law Stand	Adult	£65.00
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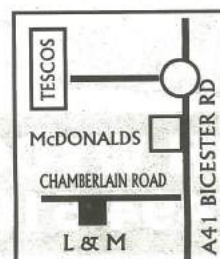
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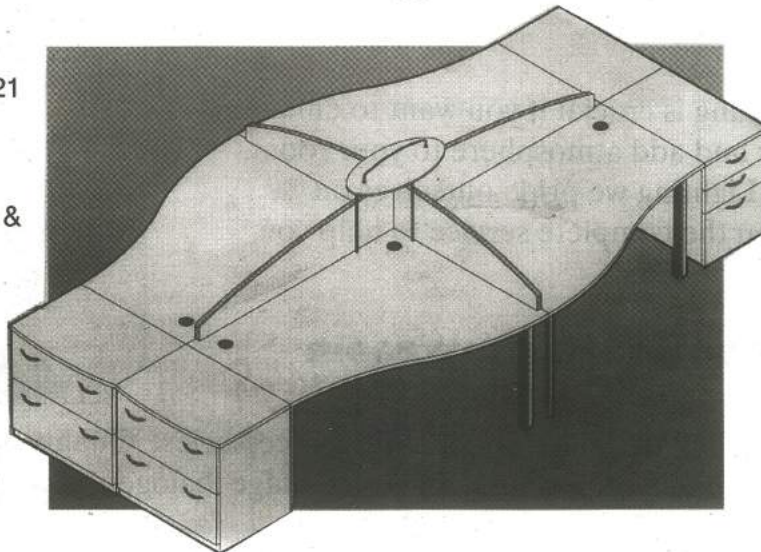
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THE BLUES NEWS

Press officer Alan Hutchinson's hoping for a home run

WE start the month with Brentford at Adams Park tomorrow. They are always difficult opponents and certainly will be this time as they fight to move away from the relegation area.

Since the arrival of Mickey Adams as manager, they have achieved the odd result that suggests a determination to improve.

The re-arranged game with Northampton is next on Tuesday, February 10. The Cobblers made a very good start to the season and having got promoted via the play-offs at Wembley last season they will be pressing to continue their success. Now established at their new Sixfields Stadium the club would be capable of first division football. No doubt both John Gregory and Richard Hill would be keen to put one over the club where they started their careers.

On Saturday, February 14, Chris Waddle

brings his Burnley team to Adams Park. Although the Clarets were bottom in January, the 2-0 win over leaders Watford could be the turning point. For weeks Waddle has been saying his team are playing well but not getting results. This will be a very important game for the Blues who must take maximum points from this one.

Next up are Preston away on Saturday, February 21. Now under new management, they expect better things from an expensive team. Like ourselves they have had a mixed bag of results so far and will be looking to establish Division Two safety. Never an easy place to take points from we shall have to prepare to battle.

Our second Tuesday game of the month takes place on the 24th at the Memorial Rugby Ground in Bristol. Currently the home of Bristol

Rovers who have surged into a play-off spot. With Barry Hayles continuing to score and a defence built on solid foundations they have kept the flag flying high in Bristol, with both City and Rovers going well the west country has high hopes. But who can forget the 4-3 victory in December 1996 on our last and only visit to this site.

The final fixture for the month sees the arrival of Gillingham on Saturday, February 28. The Gills typify the situation happening at a number of clubs in this division.

They are unpredictable but always make life difficult.

Looking at those games the three home fixtures hold the key. Maximum points from these will ease our position going into the last two months.

We need sports loving sponsors

ONE of the most frustrating things as a salesman is when the football loving person at a company who supports the club moves on and their replacement hates sport.

Business relationships can often end purely because the new incumbent is not keen on football. This scenario is all too common and there is absolutely nothing I or the club can do about the likes and dislikes of individuals.

Clearly I must concentrate on finding out the names of key individuals in locally based companies who are also football fanatics. Based on past experience if the club can get these decision makers to visit Adams Park, they are so impressed with our facilities and set up, that our conversion rate is exceptional.

Many companies faithfully support Wanderers because they like being associated with our deep roots in the community, our facilities and excellent family image. Others support us to increase their "name awareness" both locally and nationally. Others support the club because they love it and want it to continue to be successful in putting

Business can turn on individual likes

COMMERCIAL BREAK
By Mark Austin

High Wycombe on the map.

I'm sure if you carried out a survey of our loyal Blue Army there would be a lot of similarities with our sponsors and advertisers, many of whom were season ticket holders before their company got involved commercially. Without our fantastic band of regular fans we would not have any sponsors or advertisers, because no-one would spend money on branding at Adams Park if it was empty.

I believe we should do as much as we can to look after our regulars, many of who have supported the Chairboys all their lives.

Our communication with these fans could be improved and they should be consulted more. One project in the pipeline that will hopefully fulfil these needs is a new glossy publication that will act as a newsletter for fans. This new publication will be previewed in the

Spring with the first edition being published in the Summer. The idea is that it will be free to season ticket holders and sold elsewhere.

Initial ideas on content include a profile on each of the directors, detailed explanations on key issues (eg changes to the constitution), outlining of club policies and a real behind the scenes look at the club. I believe the club recognises it needs clearer lines of communication with its fans. Neither the Blues News nor the programme can fulfil the role planned for this new publication, as not only will Wanderers have total editorial control, but also sufficient space to look at issues in greater depth. If you have suggestions for content, please write to us and let us know. Alternatively you can E-Mail us at WWFC@wycombewanderers.co.uk

Just as the players have the Professional Footballers Association to represent them, managers, coaches, administrators, secretaries and commercial managers have I.F.M.A. (the Institute of Football

Management and Administrators).

Under this umbrella are several associations representing their particular group. For example managers are represented by the L.M.A. (League Managers Association) whose Chairman is Howard Wilkinson and my colleagues by the C.M.M.A. (Commercial and Marketing Managers Association) whose Chairman is Andy Dakin of Sheffield United.

We meet regionally four times a year and once a year nationally. The Northern Area is chaired by Middlesbrough's Graham Fordy and the Southern Area by myself.

The great advantage to Wanderers of my involvement is sharing of commercial information and ideas. Every year the C.M.M.A. has an annual dinner and runs a merchandising exhibition to raise money for its members. Clubs take it in turn to host meetings. The last one was at Stamford Bridge. If you have not been to Chelsea and seen their new clubshop it is worth a visit, even if it is rather expensive.

IN SHORT

Fly the flag

YOU can now sponsor the corner flags and watch the match in style from £195 up to £225.

The package includes hospitality for two including car park pass, stadium tour, a programme, four course waitress meal, half time refreshments, advert and 25 word editorial in the programme, inclusion in the man of the match presentation and your cornerflag signed after the game.

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Mufti Day

WANDERERS are holding a Mufti Day at Good Friday's Quid-A-Kid Grimsby game. Under 16s wearing a home Verco shirt will get in free. They must buy a ticket in advance and will be refunded their £1. Terrace fans don't need a ticket and will be admitted free.

Kit offer

THE clubshop catalogue is free from Wanderers in Town and the ground. It includes a £12 saving on kit.

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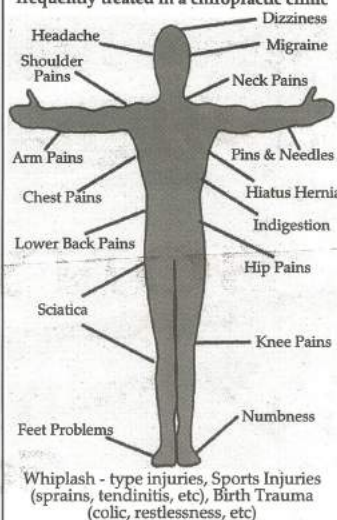
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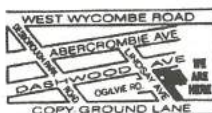
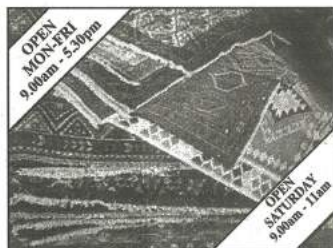
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Senior Citizens	£13	£12
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Adults	£12	£11
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Sat 7th February

Wycombe v Brentford

Sat 14th February

Wycombe v Burnley

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